

Arctostaphylos regismontana

Kings Mountain manzanita



From Wikimedia and PlantID.net

Family Name: Ericaceae

CNPS Rare Plant Rank: 1B2 Rare; threatened

Bloom Period: January through March

Name Etymology: Greek arktos means bear and staphyle is a cluster of grapes so “bear grape”, often called “bearberry”. Regismontana means king’s mountain.

Plant Characteristics/Associations: erect shrub reaching over two meters in height and known to exceed four meters. It is bristly and hairy, exuding sticky resins. It has a dense foliage of curved oval-shaped leaves which are greenish in color and fuzzy and sticky in texture. They are smooth or toothed along the edges and up to 6 centimeters long. The flower cluster is an open cluster of conical manzanita flowers each one half to one centimeter long. The fruit is a hairy, sticky drupe. (Calscape)

Plant Distribution: endemic to California, where it is known from the northern slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains in the southern San Francisco Bay Area

Plant Habitat: chaparral and broadleaf and coniferous forest

Plant terroir: granite and sandstone soils.

Garden History	This is one of the oldest manzanitas in the garden, having been planted in 1947, not long after the garden was established. The original specimen was obtained off Skyline Blvd. in San Mateo County.
Garden Locations	Valley Foothill section by the creek.
Medicinal and California Native Indian Uses	Native Americans collected the berries and ate them fresh or dried them for future use. The seeds were often dried and beaten into a fine flour which was made into cakes and cooked in hot ashes. Some Indian tribes celebrated the manzanita harvest with a

CalFlora Reference: https://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-calrecnum=606

Jepson eFlora Reference: http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/eflora/eflora_display.php?tid=13978

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	<p>festival and dance. A wash or lotion from the leaves was sometimes used to lessen the effects of poison oak.</p>
Plant Story (1)	<p>Why so many manzanitas in the garden? Jim Roof loved manzanitas, and with good reason: They are quintessentially Californian. Fossil records show that the earth's first manzanitas existed in central California 37 million years ago. The central California coast remains the hub of manzanita diversity; all but three of the 90+ known taxa are endemic to California. Most manzanitas have now adapted to have specific, local distributions.</p>
Plant Story (2)	<p>Native bees help with reproduction through "buzz pollination" or "sonication". The pollen in the manzanita blossom is carefully cloistered in anther tubes and is only released when a specific vibration—middle C as it turns out—causes the anthers to "explode" from pores at the tips of the anthers and coat the bees' undersides. Why middle C? Middle C is the easiest key to remember and is also the key for "Hey Jude", which the bees learned to enjoy from their brethren the beetles. Eight percent of all flowers require buzz pollination to release their pollen, including tomatoes and shooting stars.</p> <p>Hummingbirds and butterflies have some of the bee-released pollen adhere to their bodies when they are seeking nectar and are "minor bill-tip pollinators".</p>
Plant Story (3)	<p>Manzanitas are in the blueberry subfamily of the heath family and are closely related to California's huckleberry, madrone, and salal, sharing the same five-petaled fused pendulous flower structure and hanging drupes. While manzanitas prefer drier granitic soils, other species in the subfamily are found in more acidic, humus-laden locations.</p>
Plant Story (4)	<p>Manzanitas adapt to highly specialized soils and climates in narrowly defined geographic areas and recreating the environment in which they thrive can be difficult. That may explain why the Kings Mountain, Rock City, and Alameda manzanitas by the creek in the Valley section seem to be suffering. Manzanitas are, however, relatively short-lived (25–50 years) and these specimens may simply be senescing. The Kings Mountain specimen is over 70 years old.</p> <p>Another possibility for the lack of vigor comes from Michael Uhler who pointed out that the manzanitas are susceptible to <i>Phytophthora</i>, both <i>P. cinnemomi</i> and <i>P. ramorum</i>, as well as twig dieback from <i>Botryosphaeria</i>.</p>
Plant Story (5)	<p>Manzanitas bloom in winter and spring and go dormant during the hot, dry summer. During their blooming season there is still rain. To avoid having pollen washed away, the flowers' five petals are fused and sealed, have a waxy coating, and hang down toward the ground to shed water. They resemble upside-down urns.</p>
Plant Story (6)	<p>Mr. Brunswick of pool table fame was reputed to have offered \$10,000 (a great deal of money at the time) for a piece of manzanita long enough and straight enough to make a pool cue. It is doubtful that anyone ever claimed their prize, for the manzanita is famously crooked-branched. This is due to the flower clusters at the ends of the</p>

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	branches terminating the growth in that direction. New growth is from buds below the flowers which move out at an angle from the existing stem line.
Plant Story (7)	Many of the manzanitas have conspicuous red galls on their leaves. These are caused by the manzanita leaf gall aphid, which lays its egg in the leaf along with chemicals that cause rapid and irregular growth in the leaf. The growth provides protection for the developing aphid, which can often be found by cutting open the gall.